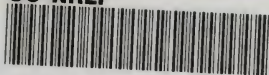


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The Life of SR THOMAS BODLEY



JAMES K. MOFFITT

Robt. A. Hudson Esq
with kind regards
from

John Lane.

With John Lane's Compliments

*The Bodley Head
Vigo St., London*



A



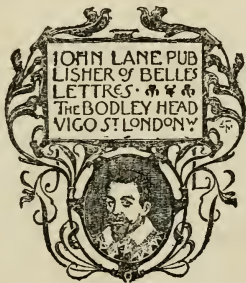
POSTERIS, ET ÆTERNITATI
SACRVM.
THOMÆ BODLÆI QVICQVID MORTALE
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INGENTEMQVE ANIMAM BIBLIOTHECA
REFERT.

HOSPES ROGATVS SISTE.
BODLÆVMQVE LOCI GENIVM ET MVSARVM
MECANATEM VITRA CÆSARES AVGVSTVM
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CONDIDIT. INTVERE

HOC VOLEBAM NESCIVS NE ESSES VALL

THE LIFE OF
SIR THOMAS BODLEY

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF



Privately reprinted for JOHN LANE
and his friends. CHRISTMAS 1894.

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GIFT



INTRODUCTION

IN sending out to my friends this reprint of the rare little *Life of Sr Thomas Bodley*, 'written by himself,' my motive for selecting this particular work for the purpose will be sufficiently obvious to them: what may be likely to cause more speculation would, however, be unaccounted for without this prefatory note—viz., my reasons for selecting Bodley as the patron saint of my business.

I have always been in doubt whether the writing of a great book or the capacity
to

to appreciate it were the finest thing in the world; but I am convinced that next in importance after the writing and the appreciating is the publishing of it. It was this which led me to regard the starting of a publishing business as a thing to be achieved sooner or later.

In July 1887, in company with my friend Mr. R. W. Wilson of the British Museum, I was one day at an exhibition in the Rembrandt Head Gallery in Vigo Street; and, casually asking the proprietor, Mr. Dunthorne, if he knew of any cosy little corner where a book-shop would be in fit setting, he at once rejoined that the premises in the same street, where he had originally hung up the sign of the Rembrandt Head, were vacant, and that he would be pleased to show them to me. I saw them, liked them, and at once made up my mind that here was the spot I had been looking for. 'It should have a sign,' I mused: Mr. Dunthorne's had captivated me. The inspiration waited on the wish: it should
be

be *The Bodley Head*. Bodley, the most pious of founders! Who could so fittingly be enshrined as patron? Besides, Bodley was one of the most notable worthies of Devon, my native county, and had I needed a contributory motive, this would have been an ample one.

Mr. C. Elkin Mathews was then in business at Exeter; and as we had already arranged that when opportunity offered itself we should join forces, he came to London at once in response to my summons, saw and liked the place as much as I did. The premises were taken in Mr. Mathews' name, for I was not at first to take an active part, and we walked away discussing the future.

'It should have a sign,' I said, 'and I have thought *The Bodley Head* is what it should be.' 'The very same idea was in my own mind,' answered my partner, fresh from Exeter, Sir Thomas Bodley's birthplace; and consumed as he was at the time with that passion for old literature which would,
Exeter

Exeter even apart, have made the coincidence perfectly natural. So *The Bodley Head* it became.

In 1888 I made the acquaintance of Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, and in 1889 introduced him to Mr. Mathews, with the result that there shortly appeared the first book with the imprint of *The Bodley Head*, Mr. Le Gallienne's first published book, *Volumes in Folio*.

Many others followed it, and in February 1892 it seemed desirable that our partnership should be indicated in the style of the firm, and that I should devote the whole of my time to the business.

About two years and a half later our seven years' partnership attained its term, and from October 1st 1894 we have been working apart.

By mutual arrangement, for our separation was of a perfectly cordial character, the sign of *The Bodley Head* was transferred to my new offices opposite.

The

The very interesting copy of the Life on which this reprint is modelled was presented to me by Mr. Mathews.

To Mr. G. F. Bodley, A.R.A., the well-known architect, a collateral descendant of Sir Thomas, I owe the opportunity of embellishing it with an engraving of the Bodley Medal, struck from the design of Jean Warin, of which only three copies are known to exist.

To my friend Mr. Walter Blaikie, of the firm of T. and A. Constable of Edinburgh, I am grateful for the thought and care he has bestowed on this modern reprint of the original pamphlet, which, although larger in size, is here reproduced page for page and line for line, from type as befits the subject, and not by any modern process.

For the photo-etchings of the medal and portrait I have to thank the Swan Electric Engraving Company, which has generously presented them to the book.

I have not attempted to add anything fresh,

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except

except the illustrations, though many interesting facts might be gleaned; but although later on occasion may present itself, here, it appears to me, such additions would be out of place.

JOHN LANE.

The Bodley Head,
CHRISTMAS 1894.



THE LIFE OF
S^r THOMAS BODLEY,
THE HONOV RABLE
FOVNDER OF THE PVBLIQUE
LIBRARY in the VNIVERSITY
of OXFORD.

VVritten by Himselfe.



OXFORD,
Printed by HENRY HALL Printer to
the UNIVERSITIE. 1647.

TO the READER.



*WHEN the Great Restorer of Learning, our Munificent Benefactor, Sir THOMAS BODLEY, made the happy Exchange of the troubles of this life, with the Glories of a better; The University, according to the greatnesse of his merits, and their losse, in solemne grieve and sadnesse, attended at his Obsequies. But lest the uncharitable censure of the world should apprehend our thankfulness buried in the same grave with him, and cold as his dead ashes, in that we pay no after tribute to so engaging a desert; VVe bring to the Altar of Eternity that part of him which yet, and ever must survive. A Monument freed from the lawes of time and ruine; Supported with the vigour of that name, which hath a seminall strength within it selfe, to make whole volumes live. But lest the judging and severer eye, viewing the nakednesse of this relation, may thence despise the poorenesse of our endeavour: That I may speake the worke above all scorne, above all praise; it was his Owne. Nor durst we call that draught in question, which felt the hand of so exact a Master; but with awe lookt on it, as on the fabrique of an ancient Temple, where the ruine furthers our Devotion; and gaudy ornaments doe but prophane the
sad*

To the READER.

sad religion of the place. 'Tis true, it savours not the language of our age, that hath the Art to murder with a smile, and fold a curse within a prayer, but speakes the Rhetoricke of that better world, where vertue was the garbe, and truth the complement. Those actions are of low and empty worth, that can shine onely when the varnish of our words doth gild them over. The true Diamond sparkles in its rocke, and in despite of darkenesse makes a day. Here then you shall behold Actions with the same integrity set downe, as they were first perform'd. A History describ'd, as it was liv'd. A Councillour that admitted still Religion to the Cabinet: and in his active aimes had a designe on Heaven. A spirit of that height, that happinesse, as in a private fortune to out-doe the fam'd magnificence of mighty Princes: whilst his single worke clouds the proud fame of the Ægyptian Library; and shames the tedious growth o'th wealthy Vatican. I know how hard a taske 'twill be to perswade any to copy out from this faire patterne; however we cannot yet so farre despaire of ingenuity, as not to expect even from th' unconcern'd disinterested Reader, a cleare esteeme and just resentment of it. If we gaine but this, we shall in part rest satisfied: In an age so wholly lost to vice, conceiving it a great degree of vertue to confesse the lustre of that good which our perverse endeavours still avoyde.

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THE LIFE OF SIR THO- MAS BODLEY.



WAS borne at *Exeter* in *Devonshire* the second of *March*, 1544. descended both by Father and Mother of worshipfull parentage. By my Fathers side, from an antient Family of *Bodley*, or *Bodleigh* of *Dunscombe* by *Crediton*; and by my Mother, from *Robert Hone* Esquire, of *Otterey Saint Mary*, nine miles from *Exeter*; my Father in the time of *Queen Mary*, being noted and knowne to be an enemy to Popery, was so cruelly threatned, and so narrowly observed, by those that maliced his Religion, that for the safeguard of himselfe and my Mother, who was wholly affected as my Father, he knew no way so secure, as to fly into *Germany*: where after a while he

he found meanes to call over my Mother, with all his children and family, whom he fetled for a time at *Wesell* in *Cleveland*, (for there, as then, were many English, which had left their Country for their conscience, and with quietnesse enjoyed their meetings and preachings;) and from thence we removed to the Towne of *Franckfort*, where was in like fort another English Congregation. Howbeit we made no long tarriance in either of those two Townes, for that my Father had resolved to fixe his abode in the City of *Geneva*, where, as farre as I remember, the English Church consisted of some hundred persons. I was at that time of twelve yeares age, but through my Fathers cost and care, sufficiently instructed to become an Auditour of *Chevalerius* in Hebrew, of *Berealdus* in Greeke, of *Calvin* and *Beza* in Divinity, and of some other Professours in that Vniversity, (which was newly then erected) besides my domesticall teachers, in the house of *Philibertus Saracenus*, a famous Physitian in that City, with whom I was boarded: where *Robertus Constantinus*, that made the Greeke *Lexicon*, read *Homer* unto me. Thus I remained there two
yeares

yeares and more, untill such time as our Nation was advertised of the death of Queene *Mary*, & succession of *Elizabeth*, with the change of Religion, which caused my Father to hasten into *England*, where he came with my Mother, and with all their family, within the first of the Queene, and settled their dwelling in the City of *London*. It was not long after, that *I* was sent away from thence to the Vniversity of *Oxford*, recommended to the teaching and tuition of Doctour *Humfrey*, who was shortly after chosen the chiefe Reader in Divinity, and President of *Magdalen* Colledge; there *I* followed my studies till I tooke the degree of Batchelour of Arts, which was in the yeare, 1563. within which yeare I was also chosen Probationer of *Merton* Colledge, and the next yeare ensuing admitted Fellow. Afterwards, to wit in the yeare, 1565. by speciall perswasion of some of my fellowes, and for my private exercise, I undertooke the publique reading of a Greeke lecture, in the same Colledge Hall, without requiring or expecting any stipend for it; Neverthelesse it pleased the Fellowship of their owne accord to allow me soone after foure markes by the

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yeare,

yeare, and ever since to continue that Lecture to the Colledge. In the yeare of our Lord 1566. I proceeded Master of Arts, and read for that yeare in the Schoole-streets Naturall Philosophy ; after which time, within lesse then three yeares space, I was wonne by intreaty of my best affected friends, to stand for the Proctourship, to which I and my Colleague, Master *Bearblocke* of *Exeter* Colledge, were quietly elected in the yeare 1569. without any competition or countersuite of any other. After this for a long time, I supplied the office of the Vniversity Oratour, and bestowed my time in the study of sundry faculties, without any inclination to professe any one aboue the rest, insomuch as at last I waxed desirous to travell beyond the Seas, for attaining to the knowledge of some speciall moderne tongues, and for the encrease of my experience in the managing of affaires, being wholly then addicted to employ my selfe, and all my cares, in the publique service of the State. My resolution fully taken I departed out of *England* Anno 1576. and continued very neare foure yeares abroad, and that in sundry parts of *Italy*, *France*, and *Germany*. A good while

while after my returne, to wit, in the yeare 1585. I was employed by the Queene to *Fredericke* Father to the present King of *Denmarke*, to *Iulius* Duke of *Brunswicke*, to *VVilliam Lantgrave* of *Hesse*, and other *German* Princes: the effect of my message was, to draw them to joine their forces with hers, for giving assistance to the King of *Navarre* now *Henry* the fourth King of *France*. my next employment was to *Henry* the third, at such time as he was forced by the Duke of *Guise* to fly out of *Paris*; which I performed in such sort, as I had in charge with extraordinary secrecy: not being accompanied with any one servant (for so much I was commanded) nor with any other Letters, then such as were written with the Queenes owne hand, to the King, and some selected persons about him; the effect of that message it is fit I should conceale. But it tended greatly to the advantage, not onely of the King, but of all the Protestants in *France*, & to the Dukes apparent overthrow, which also followed soon upon it. It so befell after this, in the year 88. that for the better conduct of her Highnesse affaires in the Provinces united, I was thought a fit person
to

to reside in those parts, and was sent thereupon to the *Hague* in *Holland*, where according to the contract that had formerly past, betweene her Highnesse and the States, I was admitted for one of their Councill of Estate, taking place in their Assemblies next to Count *Maurice*, and yeilding my suffrage in all that was proposed. During all that time what approbation was given of my painefull endeavours by the Queene, Lords in *England*, by the States of the Country there, and by all the English Souldiery, I referre it to be notified by some others relation; sith it was not unknowne to any of any calling, that then were acquainted with the State of that government. For at my first comming thither, the people of that Country stood in dangerous termes of discontentment, partly for some courses that were held in *England*, as they thought, to their singular prejudice, but most of all in respect of the insolent demeanour of some of her Highnesse Ministers, which onely respected their private emolument, little weighing in their dealing what the Queene had contracted with the States of the Country; whereupon was conceived a mighty feare
on

on every side, that both a present dissolution of the Contract would ensue, and a downright breach of amity betweene us and them. Now what meanes I set a foot for redresse of those perils, and by what degrees the state of things was reduced into order, it would require a long treatise to report it exactly; but this I may averre with modesty and truth, and the Country did alwaies acknowledge it with gratitude, that had I not of my selfe, without any direction from my Superiours, proceeded in my charge with extreame circumspection, as well in all my speeches and proposalls to the States, as in the tenour of my letters that I writ into *England*, some suddaine alarme had beene given, to the utter subversion and ruine of the State of those Provinces: which in proceffe of time must needs have wrought in all probability, the self-same effect in the state of this Realme. Of this my diligence and care in the managing of my busines, there was, as I have signified, very speciall notice taken by the Queene and State at home, for which I received from her Majesty many comfortable Letters of her gracious acceptance: as withall from that time forward

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I did never receive almost any set instructions how to governe my proceedings in her Majesties occasions, but the carriage in a manner of all her affaires was left to mee and my direction. Through this my long absence out of *England*, which wanted very little of five whole yeares, my private estate did greatly require my speedy returne, which when I had obtained by intercession of friends, and a tedious suite, I could enjoy but a while, being shortly after enjoyned to repaire to the *Hague* againe. Neverthelesse upon a certaine occasion to deliver unto her some secret overtures, and of performing thereupon an extraordinary service, I came againe home within lesse then a Twelve-moneth: and I was no sooner come, but her Highnesse embracing the fruit of my discoveries, I was presently commanded to returne to the States with charge to pursue those affaires to performance, which I had secretly proposed; and according to the project which I had conceived, and imparted unto her, all things were concluded and brought to that issue that was instantly desired, whereupon I procured my last revocation. Now here I can not choose
but

but in making report of the principall accidents that have fallen unto me in the course of my life, but record among the rest, that from the very first day I had no man more to friend among the Lords of the Councell, then was the Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*: for when occasion had beene offered of declaring his conceit as touching my service, he would alwaies tell the Queen (which I received from her selfe and some other ear-witnesses) that there was not any man in *England* so meet as my selfe to undergoe the office of the Secretary. And sithence his sonne, the present Lord Treasurer, hath signified unto me in private conference, that when his father first intended to advance him to that place, his purpose was withall to make me his Colleague. But the case stood thus in my behalf: before such time as I returned from the Provinces united, which was in the yeare 1597. and likewise after my returne, the then Earle of *Essex* did use mee so kindly both by letters and messages, and other great tokens of his inward favours to me, that although I had no meaning, but to settle in my mind my cheifest desire and dependance upon the
Lord

Lord *Burleigh*, as one that I reputed to be both the best able, and therewithall the most willing to worke my advancement with the Queene, yet I know not how, the Earle, who fought by all devises to divert her love and liking both from the Father and the Son (but from the Sonne in speciall) to withdraw my affection from the one and the other, and to winne mee altogether to depend upon himselfe, did so often take occasion to entertaine the Queene with some prodigall speeches of my sufficiency for a Secretary, which were ever accompanied with words of disgrace against the present Lord Treasurer, as neither she her selfe, of whose favour before I was throughly assured, tooke any great pleasure to preferre me the sooner, (for she hated his ambition, and would give little countenance to any of his followers) and both the Lord *Burleigh* and his Sonne waxed jealous of my courtes, as if under hand I had beene induced by the cunning and kindnesse of the Earle of *Effex*, to oppose my selfe against their dealings. And though in very truth they had no solid ground at all of the least alteration in my disposition towards either

ther of them both, (for I did greatly respect their persons and places, with a settled resolution to doe them any service, as also in my heart I detested to be held of any faction whatsoever) yet the now Lord Treasurer, upon occasion of some talke, that I have since had with him, of the Earle and his actions, hath freely confessed of his owne accord unto me, that his daily provocations were so bitter and sharpe against him, and his comparisons so odious, when he put us in a ballance, as he thought thereupon he had very great reason to use his best meanes, to put any man out of hope of raising his fortune, whom the Earle with such violence, to his extreame prejudice, had endeavoured to dignifie. And this, as he affirmed, was all the motive he had to set himselfe against me, in whatsoever might redound to the bettering of my estate, or increasing of my credit and countenance with the Queene. When I had thoroughly now be-
thought me, first in the Earle, of the slender hold-fast that he had in the favour of the Queene, of an endlesse opposition of the cheif-
est of our States-men like still to waite upon him, of his perillous, and feeble, and uncertain
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advice, aswell in his owne, as in all the causes of his friends: and when moreover for my selfe I had fully considered how very unto-wardly these two Counsellours were affected unto me, (upon whom before in cogitation I had framed all the fabrique of my future prosperity) how ill it did concurre with my naturall disposition, to become, or to be counted either a stickler or partaker in any publique faction, how well I was able, by God's good blessing, to live of my selfe, if I could be content with a competent livelyhood; how short time of further life I was then to expect by the common course of nature: when I had, I say, in this manner represented to my thoughts my particular estate, together with the Earles, I resolved thereupon to possesse my soule in peace all the residue of my daies, to take my full farewell of State imployments, to satisfie my mind with that mediocrity of worldly living that I had of my owne, and so to retire me from the Court, which was the epilogue and end of all my actions and endeavours of any important note, till I came to the age of fifty three. Now although after this, by her Majestie's direction, I was often called to the
Court

Court, by the now Lord Treasurer, then Secretary, as required by him, as also divers times since, by order from the King, to serve as Embassadour in *France*; to goe a Commiffioner from his Highnesse, for concluding the truce betweene *Spaine* and the *Provinces*, and to negotiate in other very honourable imployments, yet I would not be removed from my former finall resolution, infomuch as at length, to induce me the sooner to returne to the Court, I had an offer made me by the present Lord Treasurer (for in proceffe of time he saw, as he himselfe was pleased to tell me more then once, that all my dealing was upright, faithfull, and direct) that in case I my selfe were willing unto it, he would make me his affociate in the Secretaries office; And to the intent I might beleive that he intended it *Bonâ fide*, he would get me out of hand to be sworne of the Counsell. And for the better enabling of my state to maintaine such a dignity, whatsoever I would aske, that might be fit for him to deale in, and for me to enjoy, he would presently sollicite the King to give it passage. All which perswasions notwithstanding, albeit I was often assaulted by him,
in

in regard of my yeares, and for that *I* felt my selfe subject to many indispositions, besides some other private reasons which *I* reserve unto my selfe, *I* have continued still at home, my retired course of life, which is now methinks to me as the greatest preferment that the State can afford. Onely this *I* must truly confesse of my selfe, that though *I* did never repent me yet of those and some other my often refusalls of honourable offers, in respect of enriching my private estate, yet somewhat more of late *I* have blamed my selfe, & my nicety that way, for the love that *I* beare to my Reverend Mother the Vniversity of *Oxford*, and to the advancement of her good, by such kind of means as *I* have since undertaken. For thus *I* fell to discourse and debate in my mind, that although *I* might find it fittest for me, to keep out of the throng of Court contentions, & addresse my thoughts & deeds to such ends altogether, as *I* my selfe could best affect; yet withall *I* was to think, that my duty towards God, the expectation of the world, my naturall inclination, & very morality, did require, that *I* should not wholly so hide those little abilities that *I* had, but that in some measure, in one kind or other,

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I should doe the true part of a profitable member in the State: whereupon examining exactly for the rest of my life, what course *I* might take, and having sought (as I thought, all the waies to the wood) to select the most proper, I concluded at the last to set up my Staffe at the Library doore in *Oxford*; being thoroughly perswaded, that in my solitude and surcease from the Common-wealth affaires, I could not busy my selfe to better purpose, then by reducing that place (which then in every part lay ruined and wast) to the publique use of Students; For the effecting whereof, I found my selfe furnished in a competent proportion, of such foure kindes of aides, as unlesse I had them all, there was no hope of good successe. For without some kinde of knowledge, as well in the learned and moderne tongues, as in sundry other sorts of scholasticall literature, without some purse-ability to goe through with the charge, without very great store of honourable friends to further the designe, and without speciall good leisure to follow such a worke, it could but have proved a vaine attempt, and inconsiderate. But how well *I* have sped in all my endeavours, and how full provision *I* have made for the benefit and ease
of

of all frequenters of the Library, that which *I* have already performed in fight, that besides which *I* have given for the maintenance of it, and that which hereafter *I* purpose to adde, by way of enlargement to that place (for the project is cast, and whether *I* live or dye it shall be, God willing, put in full execution) will testifie so truly and abundantly for me, as *I* need not be the publisher of the dignity and worth of mine owne Institution. *Written with my owne hand Anno 1609. December the 15.*

THO: BODLEY.

Thus farre our Noble Author of himselfe. Who like to the first Pen-man of the sacred history, seemes to survive his grave, and to describe unto us his owne death. For having finished that great worke which future times shall ever honour, never equall, he yeilded to his fate. As being unwilling the glory of that deed should be deflour'd by the succession of an æt lesse high then it. On the 29th of Ianuary, in the yeare, 1612. his pure Soule attain'd the freedome of its owne divinity: leaving his borrow'd earth, the sad remainder of innocence and frailty, to be deposited in Merton Colledge: Who had the happinesse to call his Education hers, and to be intrusted with so deare a Pledge of immortality.

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